DOI: 10.20535/2410-8286.140853

RATIONALE FOR TRANSLATION PROJECT MANAGEMENT COURSE AS ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE

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The article provides for the rationale for a Translation Project Management course as an academic discipline that is designed to meet translation majors' needs and facilitate their entry into the profession. Its tapestry methodology incorporates current trends in contemporary Translation Studies with an emphasis on interdisciplinarity, internationalism, technological advances, student-empowerment, collaborative professional realism, and an outcomes-based approach. The theoretical strands are devised to show how students can benefit from incorporating into their professional portfolio project management techniques and quality control processes. The practical strands provide for student-empowerment in their work on real translation projects. The article sheds light into the progress made by the students throughout the period of instruction, activities in which they were involved, challenges they faced while working on their translation projects, and the results of the course evaluation by students themselves on the basis of an introspective analysis of the applicability of acquired knowledge and skills, as well as appraisal made by external examiners invited to the presentation of the students' projects. As a result of successful implementation, the course has become an integral part of the educational and research programme for training MA graduate students specialising in Philology.

Keywords: translation studies; project management; curriculum design; interdisciplinarity; teamwork.

Introduction

The image of The Tower of Babel (originating from the biblical myth related in Genesis 11: 1-9) has proven to be an invariant metaphoric core of multiple studies in the field of translation. It is explicitly recurrent in the titles of seminal works by Steiner (1975), Derrida (1985) and others. It implies a translator's attempt to rediscover the blessing of mutual understanding between people by various means – be it Steiner's "hermeneutic motion" through the stages of trust, aggression, embodiment, and fidelity/restitution, or Derrida's deconstruction of plurality of meaning and dethronement of "originality". By doing so a translator becomes an architect of a "subsidiary" Tower of Babel on the construction site of his/her culture, which underpins the similarity between the realms of architecture and translation. Both combine the art and science of designing and (re)constructing cultural symbols. Both are about effective planning, synergetic teamwork, and, ultimately – successful project management.

The aforementioned figurative reference to a key Translation Studies image is not incidental. Human cognition is metaphorical by its nature, based on the association of ideas, interconnectedness of pieces of knowledge. Therefore, interdisciplinarity has become one of the major trends in modern science and education. Applying the findings of other disciplines in their academic pursuits, scholars and educators are able to consider the objects of their interest from an out-of-the box holistic perspective. The crossfertilisation of the sciences and humanities is an ongoing reciprocal process. Once considered to be a cutting-edge educational programme STEM, focused on training students in science, technology, engineering and math, has been legitimately extended into STEAM, incorporating Art into a coherent multidisciplinary curriculum. Likewise, technological advances have dramatically changed research and teaching approaches in humanities.

Internationalism and multiculturalism constitute another mainstream issue in modern science and education. Researchers, educators, and students take part in various exchange programmes, work on multinational teams, contributing to common global goals, and consequently sharing their experience locally after completing the project. However, Ukraine has recently faced the downside of this trend, since more and more high school graduates opt for institutions of higher learning abroad, with neighbouring Poland being one of the most frequent choices. The same is true for graduate programmes. Thus universities have to do their best to retain their undergraduates and even more to attract ones from other institutions. We can suggest a hypothesis that this could be achieved by designing a curriculum with interesting, useful, and competitive courses that would meet the students' needs and facilitate their entry into professions.

Despite the fact that Translation Studies is a relatively young discipline without a long-standing tradition of institutional education, much has been done in the field of translator training. According to Kelly and Martin (2011), "Training approaches are quite diverse and are conditioned by historical and cultural factors, such as immigration and language policy, amongst others" (p. 294). Countries such as Canada and others that have more than one official language have proven to be the most prolific because they need to

meet the practical needs of their societies. International scholars address various methodological aspects of translator and interpreter training in multiple tracks including general and specialised translation (literary / nonliterary texts), as well as simultaneous and consecutive interpreting. In Ukraine, the Kharkiv School with professor L. Chernovaty as one of its founders and most prominent representatives has done a tremendous job in terms of providing for methodological substantiation and practical guidance for nurturing new generations of translators and interpreters fully-prepared to deal with real-life experience. In his book *Methods of training translation majors* Chornovaty (2013) provides for a comprehensive framework for developing the translator's competence in a wide scope of academic settings, paying proper attention not only to lexical, grammatical, stylistic, and genre specificities associated with the type of source text/message, but also to the psycholinguistic and socio-cultural aspects of the process of translating/interpreting.

Despite all the indisputable merits of the works of translation scholars and educators they seem to have overlooked a very apparent issue – nowadays translation majors are expected to be efficient not only on their own but, what is more important, they have to be reliable team-players whose personal contribution helps to achieve group synergy. With translation being gradually remodelled from a service to an industry, "that is to say, an economic activity concerned with the output of a specific product and which manages complex processes, develops synchronised goods, and which is based on teamwork, leverage of existing material (corpus)" (Pérez, 2002), a translator's portfolio of skills is supposed to comprise those of effective timemanagers, multi-taskers, localizers, computer scientists, and ultimately – project managers.

With this aim in mind, I have embarked to design a syllabus for a course on Translation Project Management that will offer constructive but reasonably minimised theoretical guidance to novices – graduate students majoring in translation – as well as provide for a more informed and reflective practice in and out of the classroom. Hence this paper sets out to specify the methodology of the course, explain its rationale, and give an overview of the results of its implementation.

Methodology

The main objective of this study has stipulated for its methodology based on an interdisciplinary tapestry approach. "In order to make a tapestry the weaver combines vertical and horizontal strands to make an aesthetically pleasing picture or design" (Scarcella, 1992, p. 3). From the perspective of curriculum design, this suggests paying sufficient attention to the course's synchronic and sequential coherence, which respectively relate the content of the course to other subjects the students are studying at the same time as well as the ones they have already taken.

Participants

27 graduate students majoring in translation took the course in 2015, 2016, and 2017 (9 each year). The discipline was taught in the third semester of the MA programme at the department of the Theory and Practice of Translation from English at Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv and took 30 hours of in-class training (lectures – 8 hours, workshops – 22 hours). The course included a final exam preceded by a presentation of the students' translation projects. The year 2015 translation majors worked in small groups on the projects of their own choice. Graduates in 2016 were involved in the project on the Ukrainian translation of the New York Times bestseller – *Dave Barry's complete guide to guys*, by Dave Barry (1996), whereas graduates in 2017 worked on English translation of a book of philosophical essays *Charunky doli* (*Meshes of fate*) by Vakhtang Kebuladze (2017). Both originals had never been translated into Ukrainian and English respectively, and both translations are ready for publication.

Materials

Multiple vertical strands woven into the tapestry of the course comprise various theoretical approaches to translation project management within a broad scope of disciplines with a special focus on Project Management (classical approaches along with such methods as *Agile, Scrum, Lean, Kanban*, and others), Translation Theory (Skopos theory, Genre theory, Translation Quality Assessment), and Information Technologies (Translator Memory Software, Gantt Chart Software). Methodologically the course is concordant with the outcomes-based approach first described in the works of Delisle (1988) that has been successfully adopted by many institutions of higher education worldwide and is actively promoted by the European Bologna Process. The methodology of the Translation Project Management course has been influenced by a social constructivist approach to training elaborated by Kiraly (2000) that fosters collaborative professional realism in the field of translation and interpretation. It also incorporates the ideas Sawyer (2004) on curriculum design and assessment as well as those of Vienne (2000) and Gouadec (2007) that take a project-based perspective.

Procedure

The horizontal strands of the research incorporate a study into the progress made by students throughout the course, analysis of the challenges they faced while working on their translation projects, course evaluation made by students themselves on the basis of an introspective analysis of the applicability of the acquired knowledge and skills, as well as appraisal made by external examiners invited to the presentation of the students' projects.

The procedure comprised three major steps: 1) Theoretical training, which suggested revising current trends in contemporary translation studies with an emphasis on such cutting-edge issues as interdisciplinarity, internationalism, technological advances, globalisation, etc., as well as translation theories that have shaped the current client-oriented interface of the discipline (pragmatics of translation, functionalist theories of translation, Vermeer's skopos theory, the theory of translatorial action, etc.) followed by introducing students to basic project management methodologies (classical predictive vs adaptive approaches) as well as approaches to translation quality testing. 2) Practical immersion: development of project management skills (time-management, technology-management (Gantt Chart Software, TM (SDL Trados) team-building) and their application in the course of working on actual translation projects. 3) Course evaluation: presentation of translation projects and their appraisal by the instructor and external examiners as well as a follow-up discussion of results with the participants.

The educational philosophy underpinning the methodology of the course is in line with the current modernisation of training that consists of a move from teacher-centred explanatory instruction to more student-centred gradual acquisition of knowledge and skills. This primarily defines the teacher as a motivator, counsellor, provider of feedback, information-gatherer, and a facilitator of group dynamics.

Results

As a result of the successful implementation of the course over three years (2015, 2016, 2017) at the department of the Theory and Practice of Translation from English at Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv along with a high evaluation by the participants and external examiners (10 faculty members – professors teaching at the MA programme), the academic discipline of Translation Project Management has become an integral part of the educational and research programme for training MA graduate students specialising in Philology 035.04 (Germanic languages and literatures [translation included]).

All participants successfully completed the course (average score 92%) and demonstrated good knowledge of project management along with the stages of the translation project management cycle; the ways to streamline translation project management with the help of modern technologies; and the criteria for assessing the quality of the translation project. The students proved their capacity to plan a successful implementation of the translation project, manage their time, perform various functions within a team, and foresee potential opportunities and risks associated with realisation of the project.

Having attended three demonstration classes (one each year) the reviewers (5 faculty members) emphasised the course's relevance to the curriculum and professional needs of the learners, the appropriateness of selection of materials and planning of in-class activities, the effectiveness of teacher-student interaction, abundant opportunities for peer interaction as well as a creative atmosphere and sensitive environment for individual learners and their needs.

Having analysed the students' performance at the presentations and exams, external examiners (5 faculty members) came to the conclusion that the course allowed participants to gain a systematic knowledge of the basics of project management in the context of Translation Studies and apply their acquired knowledge and skills in practice.

Discussion

Notwithstanding the fact that at its current stage of development Translation Studies prioritises descriptiveness, an educator dedicated to professional translator training can hardly avoid a hint of prescriptiveness in describing a methodological toolkit s/he has devised, collected, "borrowed," and honed over the years by trial and error on the path leading towards teaching excellence. It is a common knowledge that any initiation into a new endeavour – be it an academic course or an actual work project – should start by elucidating "the reason-why". This creates a "sense of purpose", which has become one of the key concepts of contemporary international pedagogical discourse. In his 2017 Harvard commencement speech Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook CEO, urged the graduates to take an active part in creating "a world where everyone has a sense of purpose". He aptly related a well-known story when John F. Kennedy visited the NASA space centre, and on seeing a janitor carrying a broom he walked over and asked what he was doing. The janitor responded: "Mr. President, I'm helping put a man on the moon" (Zuckerberg, 2017). Actually,

NASA's endeavour of putting a man on the moon is rightfully considered to be one of the best examples of project management (along with the Great Wall of China, the pyramids in Egypt, etc.) whose success was the result of collaborative efforts of all team members with the president and the janitor included among them.

Thus, the importance of asking students why they have taken the course, enquiring about their needs, expectations and explaining "how" these expectations are going to be met cannot be underestimated. The preceding 5 years of instruction (4 years of undergraduate studies and the first year of an MA programme) have contributed much to building interlinguistic and intercultural components of the future translators' competence. This is usually done from the perspective of "internal knowledge" about the translator's job, with a special focus on what it takes to complete the task (successful mastering of a wide range of academic courses, many hours of practice, etc.), what resources have to be used (online dictionaries, TM software packages, experts' opinions, etc.), and what intellectual efforts should be applied (inductive reasoning, deductive reasoning, educated guessing). Whereas taking an external perspective – that of a client – suggests a somewhat modified understanding of a translator's competence according to which a good translator should be reliable and fast. The first expectation presupposes reliability with respect to the client (sensitivity to his/her needs, flexibility, friendliness, confidentiality, and ultimately - loyalty), the text (accuracy, meticulous attention to details, etc.) and technology (hardware and software). The latter suggests meeting deadlines (sometimes multiple) without detriment to the emotional and physical health of the translator. Both expectations for translators' reliability from the vantage point of client satisfaction are concordant with the learning outcomes for which the course on Translation Project Management provides.

However, this "end-in-mind" approach by no means should undermine the significance of the starting point. A well-known formula of proactive change in any kind of human endeavour comprises three basic components – the starting point awareness, setting of goals, and subsequently defining and making the first step towards the goal. It is essential to nurture a positive mind-set in students so that they focus not so much on what they lack to achieve a certain goal, but what they already have at their disposal to do so. Hence the first part of the theoretical module of the course is designed to outline the academic terrain from which a student embarks upon the acquisition of new knowledge and skills. This reinforces the student's confidence in his or her expertise but also broadens his or her visualisation of translation not only as an interlinguistic and intercultural work of individuals committed to the high mission of importing source texts/messages into the recipient milieu, but also as an economic activity of translators as team players and market-players, the success of which is measured by the degree of satisfaction of clients (the client, the publisher, the author, the reader, and the end-user).

The other three parts of the theoretical module of the course are designed to shed light into how students can benefit by incorporating into their portfolio of professional knowledge and skills project management techniques and quality control processes. Actually, by studying the following definition of a project (as it appears in the Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge elaborated by the Project Management Institute) students cannot help but admit its applicability to his or her translating/interpreting experience – "A project is a temporary endeavour undertaken to create a unique product or service. Temporary means that a project has a definite end. Unique means that the product or service is different in some distinguishing way from all similar products or services" (PMBOK, 2000). Since any translation job is mostly not a life-long matter and is expected to be accomplished within more or less strictly defined time-limits, its temporariness is clear. Being outcome-oriented, it is aimed at delivering a unique product under unique temporal and spatial socio-cultural circumstances. Even when a literary work undergoes its recurrent re-creation, every piece in the pool of the translatorial array is unique in its own way.

At this stage of cooperative instruction, the learners are introduced to two basic project management methodologies. The first is a classical predictive approach, also known as a waterfall model, which presupposes a linear succession of the stages of a project's life cycle – from initiation to planning, executing, and closing (maintenance/implementation). This approach proves to be effective when a project is being brought into fruition in a predictable operational environment with a low probability of a change. Translating a source text that has already been published or contracted for publication is usually the case when the waterfall model is fully justified. However, with projects that require a rapid and flexible response to change in a turbulent environment an adaptive Agile approach (with its frameworks, such as Lean, Scrum, Kanban, etc.) is more advisable. As its name suggests, Agile (first launched as a software development model) "advocates adaptive planning, evolutionary development, early delivery, and continual improvement" (Agile Methodology, 2017). This approach was used by the author of this article as a member (translator) of a team working on a bilingual (Russian and English) medical book *Essays on Hip Surgery* by a Ukrainian surgeon specialising on arthroplasty Kosiakov (2015). At the time the project was initiated there was no "tangible" source text, and translating as well as editing by a native English speaker (professor M. Naydan) could begin

only after the first essay had been written. This kind of co-creative interlingual shadowing allowed the project manager (S. Korotich) to involve other team members – the photographer, graphic designer, and the publisher from the very outset. Moreover, since each portion of the project (an essay) appeared to be "deliverable", the author was able to use them in other settings (conferences, journals). The specificity of this "open-ended" project required a great deal of flexibility and adaptability. In the course of a year, the author introduced numerous changes. New experience would be gained, new interesting cases would appear, old approaches would be reconsidered leading to the book being constantly rewritten and retranslated, which also made all team members quickly respond to the changes. As a result of effective project management, the book was published and presented at the International Conference for Orthopaedic Surgeons in Kyiv in 2015. Since then there have been two editions of the "essays," each receiving high critical acclaim.

Nevertheless "high critical acclaim" is only one of the many possible ways for quality assessment of the project. Especially while dealing with non-literary texts, translation majors should also be aware of a number of quality assurance requirements (i.e. ISO 9000, DIN 2345, UNI 1057, etc.). Since project management is not only about client-satisfaction but also quality assurance and control, students are introduced to a number of relevant and user-friendly methods. One of them is the model elaborated by the Localization Industry Standards Association (LISA), according to which translations are given a "pass" or "fail" rating. Reaching an agreement with the client regarding the maximum number of errors (critical, major, minor) allows translators to see how good their work is with respect to mistranslation, terminology, language, style, and consistency. Another noteworthy approach to translation quality testing, suggested by Brunette (2000), comprises 1) didactic revision of the source and target texts for educational purposes, 2) translation quality assessment according to a predefined checklist, 3) quality control [compliance], 4) pragmatic revision aimed at improving the final version of a translation, 5) a fresh look at translation as an independent text.

The first part of the practical module of the course is aimed at enhancing translation majors' professional pride, which is achieved by cultivating in them a sense of belonging to the global community of translators. The possibility of membership in various translators' associations, participation in translation conferences, application for international grants and international exchange programmes, as well as the student's personal contribution to the development of the field (his or her MA thesis) are discussed in class along with such important issues as the translator's professional ethics, empowerment, and active involvement in the process of creating a sustainable future. As a part of their home assignment the students are asked to interview practising translators and interpreters to find out about their project management experience, challenges encountered, emotional and financial burden/satisfaction, etc. The results are further presented and discussed in class.

The success of a project is measured not only by the high quality of its outcome but also by means of its process which stems from effective planning, cohesive cross-functional teamwork and transparent channels of communication within a team. Thus, the second part of the practical module of the course is aimed at assisting the learners in acquiring and honing necessary skills, with time management being of a paramount importance. At this stage, students are engaged in a number of activities that help them streamline their performance both individually and as a group. This involves a great deal of introspection since the only way to make better use of one's time is to analyse how it is being used and then consider ways in which it could be reallocated more effectively. In one of the in-class activities, the students were asked to complete a timelog by dividing their typical day into 30-minute segments and recording what they were doing within each timeframe. After that, the students were encouraged to highlight important and urgent tasks in red, important but not urgent - in green, urgent but not important - in yellow, and finally neither urgent nor important in black. Then the students were asked to calculate the percentage of their time spent on each task. To be most effective in one's job (in terms of reliability and stress avoidance) it is good to spend about 60% of one's time in the "green zone", doing things which are important but not urgent, whereas "tasks" in the black zone - are time wasters that need to be eliminated. After using this simple introspective technique during four months of the semester on a weekly basis all students reported on significant improvement of their time management skills and increased productivity.

Another introspective assignment that assists in reducing the time the students spend working in unproductive and labour-intensive ways suggests that they should analyse their natural daily rhythm and energy patterns. To do so they are asked to draw a chart to see how their energy level varies during a typical day. The vertical axis would show their performance level (from 5 to 5, with 0 being an average level), and the horizontal – the hour of the day. By joining the marks, the students create a graph that illustrates their energy cycle. This activity helps the learners (if possible) allocate the most demanding tasks of the day to the times when they are at their physical and mental peak.

After having streamlined their individual work practices, the students were ready to explore what could be done in terms of a team with common goals and challenging tasks. Good teamwork suggests the ability to create something that is greater than the sum of its parts. This synergy always goes together with good planning, which is the main responsibility of a project manager (team leader) proficient in delegating, empowering, providing constructive feedback, as well as playing to individuals' strengths and compensating for their weaknesses. However, nowadays effective planning not only concerns people but also technology. Therefore, at this stage, the students were introduced to online interactive and collaborative Gantt Chart Software that helps to visualise the whole process. The chart shows the start and the finish date of the project; the name of each task; and the team member to whom it is assigned; when tasks start and finish; how tasks are grouped together, overlap and link with each other; the planned effort and the percentage of the task complete. Another technological advance indispensable in the translation industry is the use of translation memories systems (SDL Trados in particular) that significantly accelerate the overall translation process and reduce the costs of the project, allowing translators to leverage previously translated materials and retrieve them from the system. Thus, students are encouraged to review what they already know from the course on Information Technologies in Translation Practice.

The third part of the practical module (usually the longest in duration – 8-10 weeks) is aimed at integrating previously acquired knowledge and skills and implementing them in the process of working on an actual translation project. The students themselves may decide on the source material they want to translate (a novel or a part of it, a collection of short stories, a film script (or a script of a TV show episode), a libretto, a technical manual, a website, etc.) or they may be "commissioned" by the instructor. The first was the case with 2015 graduates. The students split into groups of three, each working on separate projects. However, such practice revealed certain limitations, mostly due to the lack of in-class time necessary to discuss all project-related issues. Therefore, in 2016 and 2017, KNU translation majors worked in groups of nine on the Ukrainian translation of the New York Times bestseller - Dave Barry's Complete Guide to Guys, and on the English translation of the book of philosophical essays Charunky Doli (Meshes of Fate) by Vakhtang Kebuladze respectively. By the beginning of this part of the practical module the participants were expected to have read the originals and be prepared to do a feasibility study: be ready to discuss the translation's function, possible challenges to be encountered along the way in terms of the specificity of the text (the author's style) along with translation quality and deadlines (two weeks before the end of the semester). The main challenge the first group predicted with respect to Dave Barry's style was the ability to come up with an adequate means for rendering his humour, the highly colloquial character of his writing sometimes intertwined with scientific style, slang, terms, realia of American culture, etc., and to be consistent in doing so. One of the stumbling blocks was the keyword – "guys". Among the options were "chuvaky" ("dudes" in back translation) and "khloptsi" ("boys"). Despite the fact that the first option would result in a very catchy title (one of the suggestions was "Chuvaky dlia Chainykiv" - "dudes for laymen"), by the end of the project the group agreed on a more reserved second option. Whereas for the second group the greatest challenge was to find official English translations of the quotes from the works of various West-European philosophers to whom Vakhtang Kebuladze refers.

Having done the feasibility study, each group elected a project manager and moved on to devising a coherent plan of action that would coordinate all the tasks to be performed (groundwork [term extraction and consistency, research, consultations, etc.]; translating, editing, proofreading, and presentation) as well as decide on individual responsibilities of the team, channels of communication, etc. The students were encouraged to break up the process into work packages, keeping in mind that each work package should produce a deliverable (a tangible result), which would be either an input into the next stage or a contribution to one of the key objectives. From that point on every class began with a briefing conducted by the project manager, during which the students discussed the progress that had been made, set the tasks for the next week, and, if necessary, adapt the plan. The instructor's role was to provide constructive feedback, facilitate group work, and if necessary assist in conflict or crisis management. By the end of this module, both groups were able to finalise their projects and present them for the students and faculty members.

Conclusions

The successful implementation of the academic discipline "Translation Project Management" in the course of three consecutive years of instruction at the department of the Theory and Practice of Translation from English (Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv), which earned high evaluations from the learners (2015, 2016, 2017 literary translation majors) and external examiners (faculty members), may be considered as proof of the hypothesis of this paper – in order to stay competitive the institutions of higher learning in Ukraine have to incorporate into their curriculum courses that would expand the learners' range

of academic experience and professional expertise by "de-compartmentalization" of education in an interdisciplinary environment, focusing on student-empowerment, collaborative professional realism, and an outcomes-based approach. The universities are expected to meet their graduates' needs by fostering in them intellectual capacities and a professional perspective commensurate with the role of a translator under precarious ever-changing circumstances, enabling them to locate their individual practice in the wider context of a team as well as a local and global community. Thus, there are great opportunities for further work in this trajectory.

The interdisciplinary "tapestry" methodology of the course attests to its theoretical significance, whereas its thoroughly designed syllabus that might be easily tailored to a curriculum of any institution of higher learning proves to be its practical value. The findings of this paper provide for a stimulus for reflection and discussion on the applicability of project management techniques while teaching various academic disciplines. Translation Studies with its symbol of unattainable perfection – the Tower of Babel – is just one of them.

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Received: August 20, 2018 Accepted: November 19, 2018